MEDIA RELEASE

Felony Battery Arrest
Victim Beaten Unconscious Over Broken Necklace

SANTA BARBARA, CA – October 22, 2012

Ryan James Tefft, age 22, of Santa Barbara was arrested for battery resulting in bodily injury, a felony. The victim, a 26-year old Santa Barbara resident, was beaten unconscious and sustained a large laceration to his forehead during the incident.

On October 20, 2012, at 1:58 a.m., SBPD Officer John Thompson and Officer Kody Cardana responded to a call of a battery that had just occurred at the intersection of Haley Street and Fig Avenue. The suspect was described as a white male wearing a Metal Mulisha t-shirt that was last seen running westbound on Cota Street.

Officer Thompson was in the area within one minute and located the suspect, Tefft, hiding behind a low wall in the parking lot of 535 Chapala Street. Tefft had blood on his shirt, hands, and shoes. Upon contact he spontaneously stated to Officer Thompson that he had just been involved in a fight and that the other involved party had broken his necklace.

The victim was immediately transported from the scene by paramedics to Cottage Hospital Emergency Room for treatment. Officer Cardana located two witnesses to the incident who positively identified Tefft as person who battered the victim.

Investigation indicates the following. Just prior to the incident Tefft and a companion were standing to the rear of the Santa Barbara Brewing Company at 501 State Street preparing to smoke marijuana. Tefft noticed the victim across the street urinating behind the Santa Barbara Business College at 506 Chapala Street. Tefft called out to the victim to warn him about the possibility of getting caught urinating. The victim then approached Tefft and his companion and tried to interject himself into their conversation. The victim then fell to the ground and Tefft assisted him back to his feet. A moment later the victim started grabbing at Tefft's chest, prompting Tefft to push the victim away and tell him to back off. Despite this, the victim managed to grab Tefft's silver necklace, given to him by his deceased father, and break it. Enraged, Tefft punched the victim on the face, causing him to fall to the ground. Tefft continued to repeatedly punch and kick the victim on the head, stopping after he noticed a large amount of blood pooling on the ground beneath it. Tefft then left the scene and was contacted a moment later by Officer Thompson.

The victim was later contacted at Cottage Hospital and his injuries were photographed by CSI Officer Beth Lazarus. The victim declined to make a statement about the incident.

Tefft was booked at Santa Barbara County Jail on the aforementioned charge with a bail amount of $50,000.00. Photo provided by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office.

Tefft, Ryan James

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